

## Ground Zero Elected Officials and Residents Demand Better Emergency Plan for Deutsche Bank Demolition

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) joined with other elected officials, community activists, and residents of Lower Manhattan to criticize the Emergency Action Plan in place for the demolition of 130 Liberty Street, calling the plan "dangerously inadequate." Nadler called on New York City's Office of Emergency Management and the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation to work together to develop a more detailed community notification and response plan that takes into consideration the special circumstances and sensitivities of the surrounding neighborhood.

"Given the trauma suffered by the workers and residents of Lower Manhattan four and a half years ago, we simply cannot accept a business-as-usual approach to potential toxic releases and other emergency situations down here," Congressman Nadler said.

"The opportunity to make sure that the remediation of environmental contamination in this building is done right is slipping away as the deconstruction of 130 Liberty continues without a proper notification plan to alert residents and businesses in the event of a release of contaminants," state Senator Martin Connor said. "I join in calling on the responsible environmental protection agencies to create a plan that takes into account the needs and concerns of those living and working in the area."

The planned demolition of the former Deutsche Bank building, still heavily contaminated with asbestos and other toxic dust on 9/11, poses extraordinary risks to the workers on the job and to the people who live and work in the surrounding area. The site has already been plagued by major incidents, such as falling glass reaching street level. And last week, a worker fell 40 feet and suffered significant injuries, including a fractured spine.

The latest incident raises additional questions about the nature and efficacy of the existing Emergency Action Plan, because of a nearly two-hour delay in notifying the Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the fall.

For at least a year and a half, the community has called on LMDC, OEM and other relevant agencies to produce a proper plan. Individual residents, the local Community Board, tenants associations, advocacy organizations, and elected officials have repeatedly made this request in public information sessions and during meetings of LMDC's 130 Liberty Community Advisory Council.

Since last December, LMDC has promised that a comprehensive Emergency Action Plan would be in place before demolition began. Unfortunately, the abatement phase of the deconstruction has begun with a plan in place that fails to address key community concerns. At an Advisory Council meeting this morning, elected officials joined with the community once again to demand that OEM work with LMDC to significantly revise and augment the plan before the demolition phase begins.

"More than a year ago, at a Community Board 1 meeting, area residents asked LMDC's Deconstruction Project Manager what LMDC would do if there was a toxic release or another kind of serious emergency at the Deutsche Bank building. When she said we'll just call 9-1-1, she was nearly laughed out of the room. Now with the Phase 1 demolition underway, LMDC has made very little progress toward an adequate emergency plan for the community. People who live and work in the shadow of that building understand very well that being able to make informed decisions about what steps to take under which circumstances can mean the difference between life and death. They have a right to a proper emergency plan.

&ndash; Kimberly Flynn, 9/11 Environmental Action,

"On September 11th, we evacuated ourselves. We want, and we're entitled to some basic preparedness if an emergency arises at 130 Liberty. That no one has attempted to provide a written emergency plan for area residents, nearly 5 years later, is unacceptable. I shouldn't have to go through CERT training financed by LMDC in order to know if LMDC has a plan and what is in it."

&ndash; Kathleen Moore, 125 Cedar Street resident

"As a member of the Lower Manhattan CERT team I am very concerned about LMDC's poor planning for an emergency at the 130 Liberty Street deconstruction. We are not trained to act as first responders. There are two things the CERT team can do: One is to make residents and workers in the immediate area aware of how to prepare well BEFORE an emergency, the second is to implement a system of radio communications, or a phone tree, that can be accessed from a remote location if the need arises. Both of these would require written plans, and those don't exist now, so I am at a loss to understand how the CERT team is expected to react in a potentially dangerous situation. And plans should be tested before being put into action. To date, neither the implementation of radio communications or a phone tree has been tested in preparation for Phase II of this demolition."

&ndash; Esther Regelson, downtown resident and member of Battery Park City Community Emergency Response Team

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